



H.R. 2317 – Lobbying Transparency Act of 2007

Floor Situation

H.R. 2317 is being considered on the floor pursuant to a closed rule. The rule:

- Provides one hour of general debate equally divided and controlled by the Chairman and Ranking Member of the Committee on the Judiciary.
- Waives all points of order against its consideration except for those arising under clauses 9 (earmarks) and 10 (PAYGO) of Rule XXI.
- Provides one motion to recommit with or without instructions.
- The Chair may postpone consideration of the bill to a time designated by the speaker.

The rule also self enacts a change to the House Rules. Subparagraph (3)(Q) of clause 5(a) of rule XXV is amended to allow attendance at charitable events.

This bill was introduced by Representative Chris Van Hollen (D-MD) on May 15, 2007. The bill was ordered to be reported from the Committee on the Judiciary, by voice vote, on May 17, 2007.

H.R. 2317 is expected to be considered on the floor on May 24, 2007.

Summary

H.R. 2317 requires a lobbyist who bundles 2 or more contributions to a covered recipient exceeding \$5,000 during a quarterly filing period to file a report to the Clerk of the House and the Secretary of the Senate. The report must include:

- The name of the registered lobbyist;
- In the case of an employee, the name of the employer; and,
- The name of the covered recipient to whom the contribution is made and the good faith estimate of the total amount of the contributions.

The report can exclude any information that is already required to be included in another report.

Within 25 days after the quarterly reporting deadline, a registered lobbyist must transmit by certified mail to a covered recipient who received the contribution a statement containing:

- The information that will be included in the report with respect to the covered recipient;
- The source of each contribution included in the aggregate amount which the registered lobbyist bundled for the covered recipient during the period covered by the report and the amount of the contribution attributable to each such source; and
- A notification that the covered recipient has the right to respond to the statement to challenge and correct any information included before the registered lobbyist files the report.

Definitions

A registered lobbyist “bundles” a contribution if:

- The contribution is received by a registered lobbyist for, and forwarded by a registered lobbyist to, the covered recipient to whom the contribution is made; or,
- The contribution will be or has been credited or attributed to the registered lobbyist through records, designations, recognitions or other means of tracking by the covered recipient to whom the contribution is made.

A covered recipient means:

- A Federal candidate, an individual holding Federal office, a leadership PAC, or a political party committee.

Background

Current law does not require a lobbyist to file a report on this type of bundling to covered recipients. The intent of this legislation is to provide transparency to contributions made in Federal elections.

In a law enacted in November of 2002 (PL 107-276), it became illegal for the national parties to collecting huge corporate, union and individual donations. Because of this, individuals began to solicit donations of up to \$2,000, bundle them, and then turn over the aggregate amount to Federal candidates or officeholders.

Cost

“CBO estimates that implementing the bill would increase administrative costs of the House of Representatives and the Senate by less than \$500,000 a year. Enacting the bill would not affect direct spending or revenues.” Congressional Budget Office

Staff Contact

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